THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 17th March 1954.

The House met in the Assembly Chamber, Government Estate, Mount Road, at nine of the clock, Mr. Speaker (THE HON. SRI J. SIVASHANMUGAM PILLAI) in the Chair.

I.—INFORMATION *RE* CHIEF MINISTER'S HEALTH.

SRI S. DEIVASIGAMANY :—" Mr. Speaker, Sir, the continued absence of the Hon. Chief Minister is causing some anxiety in us. We will be very thankful to you if you will kindly inform us about the present state of health of the Hon. Chief Minister."

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" Sir, the Hon. Chief Minister has recovered from his illness. He is quite normal now but he is a little bit weak. I hope he will attend the Assembly very soon."

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II.—QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

STARRED QUESTIONS.

Question postponed from the list for 16th March 1954.
Cholera Relief Committee, Ponnani.

* 202 *Q.*—SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP : Will the Hon. the Minister for Land Revenue be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Government have received through the Collector of Malabar any memorandum, dated 16th December 1953, from the Cholera Relief Committee, Ponnani, containing suggestions for relief work in that area; and

(*b*) if so, the action thereon?

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU NAICKER :—

" *Clause (a)* The Memorandum was addressed to the Collector of Malabar and it was received and dealt with by him.

" *Clause* (*b*) Immediately after the outbreak of the cholera the Collector sanctioned the issue of 40 bags of rice for free distribution in the affected area. He also despatched a special quota of 29 barrels of milk powder for immediate distribution in Ponnani. A sum of Rs 100 was sanctioned from the Malabar Distress Relief Fund for meeting the expenses such as the burial of the dead, purchase of medicine and cloth and treatment of the cholera affected families. Measures for providing employment to the coir workers have also been undertaken. The Government have sanctioned the metalling of the Chettuvai-Ala road and the Edathiruthy-Edamuttam road as low-scale famine relief works. They have further sanctioned the work of forming a road from Kottapadi to Kundukadavu at an estimated cost of Rs. 60,000 and the work of improving the Moonnuppedika-Kakkathiruthi road in the Nattika firka. The Collector also proposes to start a few local development works under the Five-Year Plan. The

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Collector is further examining the question of formation of a Jaggery Co-operative Society, the question of starting a spinning centre and also the question of introducing improved methods in coir production. These measures will, no doubt, go a long way to relieve the affected persons."

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" On a previous occasion, it was mentioned that the construction of Chettuvaila bridge was under the consideration of Government. May I know whether that 'consideration' has been finished? May I know when the construction of the bridge would be taken up?"

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU NAICKER :—" I am afraid the hon. Member has not understood the answer I gave to the present question. I have said that Government have sanctioned the work of forming a road from Kottapadi to Kundukadavu at an estimated cost of Rs. 60,000. But the hon. Member is referring to the construction of a bridge, to answer which I want notice."

SRI P. K. GOPALAKRISHNAN :—" May I know whether the Government are aware of the fact that cholera is spreading in the villages of Ponnani taluk? May I know what steps they have taken to prevent the spread of cholera in Ponnani taluk?"

MR. SPEAKER :—" The question may be put to the Hon. Minister sitting next to the Hon. Revenue Minister; I mean the Hon. Minister for Health."

SRI P. K. GOPALAKRISHNAN :—" Sir, the relief measures taken by Government to prevent the outbreak of cholera are quite meagre. The wages given to the workers engaged in road works are less than what is recommended by the Famine Relief Committee. Will the Government issue orders so that the workers may be paid wages with which they could have one square meal a day?"

MR. SPEAKER :—" Perhaps the hon. Member means one meal a day in addition to the wages."

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU NAICKER :—" I think that depends upon the wage level in that area. I think it is better to address the District Collector in the matter."

SRI V. R. KRISHNA AYYAR :—" The Hon. Minister said in his answer to the main question that Government have sanctioned the work of forming a road from Kottapadi to Kundukadavu and that various other relief works are being examined by the Collector. If the Collector is examining the question, since, due to our experience of more than two years in the Legislature, we know full well that between the actual sanctioning of a work and its actual implementation several months or I might even say years would elapse and what is now required to prevent the recrudescence of cholera is for the Government to start relief works immediately, will the Hon. Minister take immediate action in the matter by calling for a report from the Collector and sanction relief works immediately?"

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU NAICKER :—" No case of delay has arisen in this case at all. Passing of orders naturally takes time. I shall do my best to implement the contemplated proposals."

SRI S. RAMALINGAM :—" கனம் மந்திரி அவர்கள் தான் அளித்த பதிலில் பொன்னானித் தாலூகாவில் பஞ்ச நிலைமை இருக்கிறதினால்தான் காலரா பரவுகிறது என்றும் பஞ்சத்தைப் போக்குவதற்கு பஞ்ச நிவாரண வேலைகள் தொடங்கப்பட்டிருக்கின்றன என்றும் கூறினார்கள். அப்படிப்பட்ட பஞ்ச நிலைமை அங்கு இருக்கிறதென்றால், அப்பஞ்சம் ஏன் ஏற்பட்டிருக்கிறது என்ற காரணத்தை ஆராய்ந்து அதன் அடிப்படையைத் தகர்ப்பதற்கு சர்க்கார் முன் வருவார்களா ? "

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU NAICKER :—" Cholera spreads really because people have taken shell fish with groundnut cake and not on account of famine conditions. Of course it is true they did not get enough work to earn reasonable wages."

SRI P. SELVARAJ :—" We know that cholera could be cured by medicine. May I know how relief works are going to cure cholera? "

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU NAICKER :—" It cures in this way. By relief works, the workers get money and with that money they take wholesome food. If they take wholesome food, they will not get disease."

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" Are any of the works mentioned by the Hon. Minister undertaken by Government or are they being done by contractors or other private agencies? "

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU NAICKER :—" The crucial thing is that the work must go on. It does not matter very much whether it is carried on by Government or by a private person."

SRI KUNHI MOHAMAD SHAFEE :—" Sir, may I know what were the relief measures that were taken with regard to Kadappuram amsam of Chowghat firka in Ponnani taluk where considerable number of persons died due to outbreak of cholera and relief measures were sought for from Government? May I also know whether any representations have been made to start relief works in this amsam also? "

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU NAICKER :—" The answer covers the whole of Ponnani taluk. I hope it includes the amsam mentioned by the hon. Member."

SRI T. C. NARAYANAN NAMBIAR :—" The Hon. Minister had stated that cholera broke out because people began to eat groundnut cake. (The Hon. Sri M. A. Manickavelu Naicker : Because they took shell fish with groundnut cake.) Did the Hon. Minister make the statement under the presumption that generally cholera will attack people eating those things? May I point out to the Hon. Minister that the people of Ponnani taluk had been attacked with cholera not because they took the things mentioned by the Hon. Minister but because they were not able to eat wholesome food, they were not able to have even a single meal a day but only because of their starvation, cholera did break about? "

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THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU NAICKER :—" The basic cause may be there. But the immediate cause for the outbreak of cholera was because some people began to take a kind of snake-like fish with groundnut cake. That was the reason for the outbreak of the disease."

9–10 a.m. SRI V. R. KRISHNA AYYAR :—" Since the cholera season coincides with the monsoon season in Malabar and since we are just only two months before the rainy season, may I request the Hon. Minister to call for an urgent report as regards the employment position in the locality and rush in buffer stock of preventive medicine? "

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU NAICKER :—" Yes, Sir, I will call for a report from the District Collector."

* 204, 205 and 206 Q.—

MR. SPEAKER :—" We can take up questions 204, 205 and 206 together."

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" The same answer will apply to all these questions."

Order under section 144 *in Thrithala, etc., firkas, South Malabar.*

* 204 Q.—SRI E. T. KUNHAN : Will the Hon. the Chief Minister be pleased to state—

(*a*) the circumstances which necessitated the promulgation of an order under section 144 recently in Mezhathur village and four other adjoining villages in Thrithala firka of Ponnani taluk; and

(*b*) what is the amount spent in enforcing this order in the said villages?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM (on behalf of Hon. the Chief Minister) :—" (*a*) On the 2nd February 1954, a public meeting was convened for the purpose of protesting against the alleged assault on a Harijan. While one of the Communist leaders was addressing the meeting, the person who was alleged to have assaulted the Harijan and who was also present among the audience wanted an opportunity to represent his side of the matter. He was not allowed to speak and this led to an exchange of blows between the two parties. Following this the relationship between the office bearers and supporters of the Thrithala Firka Communist Party, the Thrithala Firka Kisan Sangam and the Thrithala Harijan Club on the one side and the supporters of a local organization styled as anti-Communist front on the other became strained. Each party was preparing to hold public meetings obviously with a view to criticise the opposite party. The Second-class Magistrate, Ponnani, received information that a clash between the two groups was imminent. With a view to prevent any breach of the peace and disturbance of the public tranquillity the Magistrate promulgated an order under section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, prohibiting the holding